BRITISH COLUMBIA

BC STATS

Ministry of Management Services

Infoline

Contact: bcstats.infoline@gems6.gov.bc.ca *Issue: 04-39* *October 1, 2004*

- British Columbia's population reaches 4,196,383 on July 1st
- Babies born in British Columbia during 2002 had highest life expectancy in the country
- 93 homicides reported by police in British Columbia in 2003

Population

- **British Columbia's population stood at 4,196,383 on July 1st, an increase of 1.1% from a year earlier.** Alberta (+1.4%) again experienced the fastest population growth among the provinces, followed by BC and Ontario (both at +1.1%). The Canadian population grew 0.9% during the same period. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Between July 1, 2002 and June 30, 2003, Vancouver's population grew by 21,707 as a result of net migration (including people who moved from other parts of BC, the rest of Canada, or from other countries).** Relative to the size of its population, Vancouver had the fourth highest net migration rate (10.3 per 1,000 population) in Canada, after Oshawa (21.4), Toronto (12.9) and Calgary (10.4). Net migration was a less significant factor in Victoria (6.2) and Abbotsford (2.8), the other census metropolitan areas in BC.

  Many of the migrants to large cities come from outside the country. In Toronto, most (60%) newcomers were immigrants to Canada, as were a substantial share of newcomers to Vancouver (46%), Montreal (41%) and Windsor (28%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

The Economy

- **The number of British Columbians receiving regular Employment Insurance (EI) benefits fell 2.7% (*seasonally adjusted*) to 55,550 in July.** The Canadian number also decreased (-1.9%), dropping to 527,900. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **The volume of coal produced in the province continued to increase in July, rising to 2.3 million tonnes, 28.2% more than in the same month of 2003.** Coal production in the province has been increasing at double-digit rates since March. BC accounts for just over 40% of the total volume of coal production in Canada. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

Life Expectancy at Birth

- **Babies born in British Columbia during 2002 had the highest life expectancy in the country.** The overall life expectancy for children born in that year was 80.6 years, nearly a year longer than the Canadian average (79.7 years). Newborns in Ontario (80.1) had the second-highest life expectancy in the country.

  Both boys (78.2) and girls (82.9) born in this province in 2002 could expect to live longer than their counterparts in other regions of Canada. For Canadian males, life expectancy at birth was 77.2 years. The life expectancy of females was unchanged at 82.1 years. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Canada's infant mortality rate increased to 5.4 deaths for every 1,000 live births in 2002, up from 5.2 in the previous year.** The increase was due to deaths of newborns less than one day old and was especially pronounced in Alberta, where the rate rose from 5.6 to 7.3 per 1,000 live births in 2002. The infant mortality rate in Alberta was the highest it has been since 1994. Premature babies, and those with low birth weights, are at highest risk, and Alberta has consistently had higher proportions of newborns in these categories. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

Homicides

- **There were 93 homicides reported by police in British Columbia in 2003, a decrease of 33 from the number reported in the previous year.** As a result, the province's homicide rate fell from 3.06 per 100,000 population to 2.24. Eleven of the homicides reported in 2003 actually occurred in previous years, including six that were reported as a result of ongoing investigations in Port Coquitlam. In 2002, 15 re-

Report Three years later, is 9/11 still having an effect?

Did you know...
One in every seven homicides in Canada last year involved organized crime or street gangs

ported homicides occurred in previous years, all of them related to the Port Coquitlam investigation. *Data Source: SC, Catalogue 85-002, Vol 24, No 8*

- **Canada's homicide rate fell to its lowest level (1.73) in more than three decades in 2003, continuing a long decline that began in the mid-1970s.** Canadian police services reported 548 homicides in Canada in 2003, 34 fewer than in the previous year. Most of the homicide victims were killed by an acquaintance (51%) or family member (34%). Only 14% of victims in 2003 met their end at the hands of a stranger. There were 78 spousal homicides, including 14 men who were killed by their wives, and 84 victims of gang-related homicide (most of which occurred in Ontario). Thirty-three children were murdered, the lowest number in over 25 years. Fourteen of them were less than one year old. *Data Source: SC, Catalogue 85-002, Vol 24, No 8*

- **Shooting (29%), stabbing (26%) and beating (22%) were the methods most commonly used to commit murder.** In addition 12% of Canadian victims died as a result of strangulation or suffocation. Half of the homicides in 2003 occurred during the commission of another offence.

  Most firearms used to commit homicides were not registered and the accused people were not licenced firearm users. Between 1997 and 2003, the registration status was known for 46% of firearm related homicides in Canada. Of these, 86% were not registered and 80% of the accused did not possess a valid firearms licence.
  Data Source: SC, Catalogue 85-002, Vol 24, No 8

Deaths

- **There were 28,883 deaths in British Columbia in 2002.** Nationally, a third of the 223,603 deaths in 2002 were due to diseases of the circulatory system. Cancer (29%) was the second most common cause of death. Half of all cancer deaths were the result of malignant neoplasms in one of four sites: lung, colorectal, breast and prostate. Lung cancer was the biggest killer, accounting for just over a quarter (17,188) of all cancer deaths in 2002. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

High-Speed Internet Access

- **In 2003, two-thirds (66%) of Canadian firms used broadband Internet, up from 48% in 2001.** Half of the firms using broadband also had a web site. This compares to 29% of firms that were using low-speed Internet services. High-speed firms accounted for 97% of online sales in Canada in 2003. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

Aboriginal Entrepreneurs

- **Most Aboriginal business owners surveyed in 2002 reported that their business was profitable, and that they expected it to grow during the next two years.** Business owners in BC and Yukon were the most optimistic (70%). Nationally, 63% of Aboriginal business owners said that they anticipated growth.
  Data Source: SC, The Daily

The Nation

- **Manufacturers' prices were 4.9% higher this August than in the same month of 2003.** Petroleum and coal products (+21.1%) continued to have a strong influence on the 12-month change, but prices for other products such as primary metals (+22.4%) and lumber & wood (+16.2%) were also sharply higher. BC softwood lumber prices rose 26.8%, with both coastal (+7.4%) and interior (+36.6%) producers receiving substantially more for their products than in August 2003. At the same time, prices for BC pulpwood chips were up 13.0%. Metal prices remained robust, with year-over-year increases for BC's major metal products ranging from +5.1% for gold to +207.4% for molybdenum. Oil prices were 33.7% higher than in August 2003, while natural gas prices increased 5.6%. Coal producers received 0.9% less than in August 2003. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Canada's economy expanded 0.1% (seasonally adjusted) in July, following solid growth (+0.4%) in the previous month.** Goods producing industries (+0.2%) provided much of the impetus, with the service sector (+0.1%) expanding at a slower rate. Primary industries-agriculture, forestry and fishing (+0.3%) and mining, oil & gas extraction (+0.2%) bounced back after slipping in June, as did the utilities industry (+0.8%). In the service sector, 8 of the 13 industries advanced, led by wholesale (+0.6%) and retail (+0.5%) trade.
  Data Source: Statistics Canada

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For data originating from Statistics Canada, data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the catalogue number.

Infoline Report

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Contact: Lillian Hallin (250) 387-0366
Originally published in *Tourism Sector Monitor*, Issue 04-08. Annual Subscription $60 +GST

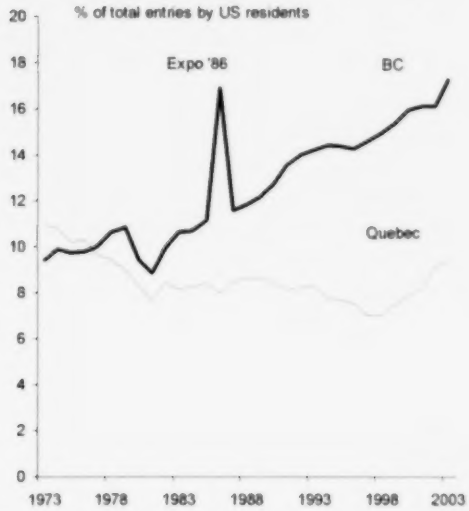
Travel from the US to Canada: Three Years Later, Is 9/11 Still Having an Effect?

BC—a prime destination for Americans

Americans are a significant driving force in BC's tourism economy. In 2003, US residents made more than 35 million trips to Canada. Over 6 million of those visits began in British Columbia.

BC is the second most common point of entry for US residents, after Ontario. The province has held this position since 1977, when it first overtook Quebec, and the percentage of US visitors entering Canada via British Columbia has been growing steadily during most of the period since then. Last year, 17% of all US entries to Canada were through British Columbia, a proportion not seen since 1986, when Vancouver hosted an international exposition.

Seventeen percent of American visits to Canada started out in BC last year



Source: Statistics Canada

By comparison, Quebec was the first point of entry for 9% of American visitors to Canada in 2003. Ontario's share was 62%, down from a peak level of 71% reached in 1981.

Number of US residents entering Canada ('000)

	2000	2001	2002	2003
Canada	43,994	42,871	40,835	35,495
BC	7,006	6,895	6,583	6,125
Alberta	732	732	733	696
Ontario	29,119	28,099	26,198	21,954
Quebec	3,479	3,506	3,712	3,350
Rest of Canada	3,658	3,639	3,610	3,370

Source: Statistics Canada

About 2% of visitors from the US enter Canada via Alberta, with the remaining 9% coming to other provinces. BC is the only region that has experienced a substantial increase in market share during the last 30 years.

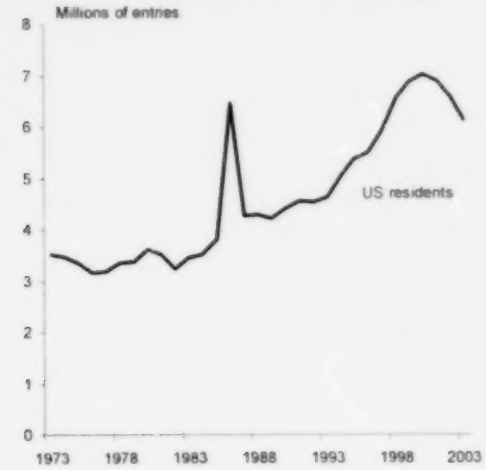
It should be noted that visitor entry statistics don't give a complete picture of tourist activities, since they only indicate where the first point of entry into the country is. Travellers going to other parts of Canada may enter via BC, but have an ultimate destination that is in some other province. However, it is likely that a significant part of the substantial increase in entries over the last thirty years represents tourists who are visiting the province. Even those who are simply travelling through British Columbia provide a boost to the economy by purchasing goods and services from local merchants.

Post 9/11 decline

The events of September 11, 2001 had an immediate and lasting impact on visits from the US, bringing an abrupt end to what had been a steady increase in travel to the province. Entries from the US have continued to decline since then. The chance of a turnaround was hampered by factors such as the war in Iraq, and the SARS

outbreak in the spring of 2003, which had a dampening effect on travel by Americans to the province.

Travel from the US to BC fell sharply after 9/11



Source: Statistics Canada

However, BC appears to have been less affected than other parts of the country were. Even though the number of entries from the US has decreased since 9/11, British Columbia's share of total US visitor entries has been growing substantially. This suggests that British Columbia continues to be an attractive destination for Americans.

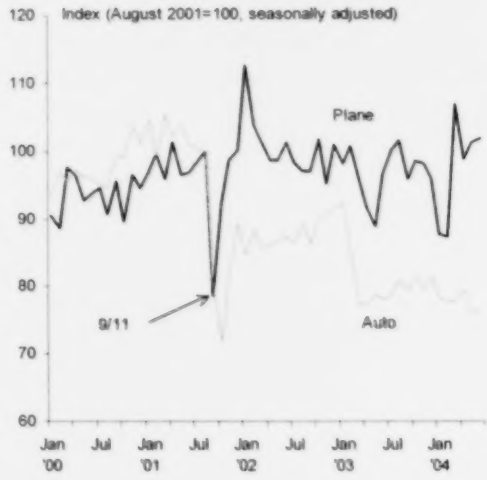
Travel by air has bounced back since 9/11; auto traffic remains stalled

By far the most common mode of travel for Americans coming to Canada is by car: some 68% of total entries by US residents to BC in 2003 were individuals in private vehicles. Another 17% flew into BC, while 9% travelled by boat. Nationally, travel by car is even more common, accounting for 81% of all US entries into Canada in 2003. Airplane passengers made up 11% of the national total, with the remainder travelling by bus, train, boat, or some other means.

Monthly data on US visitor entries to BC (*seasonally adjusted*) suggest that the post-9/11 slowdown in travel by plane was not long-lived. By December of 2001, the number of Americans flying into BC was back up to a more normal level.

Turbulence in the airline industry, and the impact of external events such as SARS and the war in Iraq have contributed to some ups and downs in passenger volumes from the US during the period since then, but it is clear that entries by plane are now back on course. In 2003, 17% of all US visitors flew to BC, up from 15% in 2001, and 14% in the previous year. The increase in the relative importance of US air travel to BC may be partly due to Vancouver's role as a hub city for airline travel, but also reflects a shift in the behaviour of US residents, as fewer of them are opting to drive when they travel to this province.

US entries by plane back on course; travel by auto still down



Source: Statistics Canada

The long-term effect of the 9/11 attacks appears to have been greatest for those travelling by car. The number of US entries by auto remains significantly lower than it was in the summer of 2001. About 370,000 US vehicle passengers crossed the BC border in June 2004, 26% less than in June 2001, when more than 500,000 US auto passengers entered Canada via BC. Entries by auto picked up in 2002, but plunged again in March 2003, when the war in Iraq began.

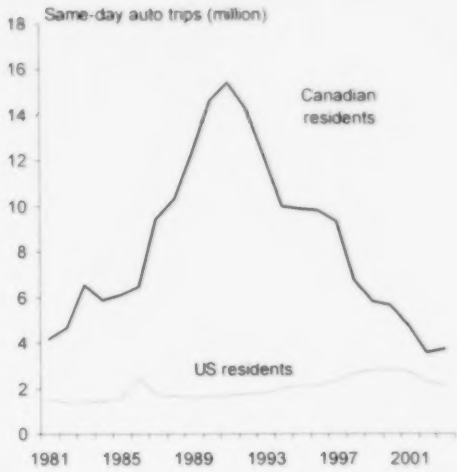
Longer waits at BC-US border crossings

There are eighteen border crossings connecting British Columbia and the US. Border crossings in the Lower Mainland Area-Peace Arch, Pacific Highway, Lynden/ Aldergrove, Sumas/ Huntingdon are among the busiest. Most vehicle passengers-Canadians, Americans and foreign tourists-travelling to or from the US enter or leave BC via one of these four crossings.

Statistics from the IMTC Cross-Border Trade and Travel Study[1], show that traffic volumes have dropped significantly at all four of these crossings. However, the downturn began well before the events of 9/11. In 1993, a total of 14.1 million vehicles travelled (northbound and southbound) through these checkpoints; last year, the number totalled 7.0 million, 1.2 million less than in 2000.

The downturn in vehicle traffic through these border crossings is coincident with a decline in same-day travel to the US. During the 1980s, a relatively strong Canadian dollar made it cost-effective for Canadians to travel to the US to shop, and many residents of the Lower Mainland area (and other centres close to the US) made frequent trips across the border. Between 1981 and 1991, the number of same-day car trips from BC to the US increased from 4 million to 15 million. The depreciation of the Canadian dollar during the 1990s effectively halted much of this activity. By the year 2000, the number had dropped to just under 6 million, and last year, fewer than 4 million same-day trips were made to the US.

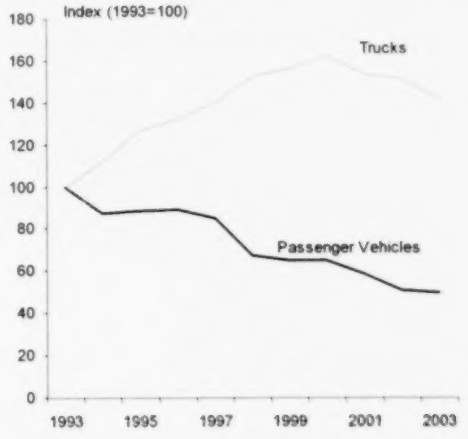
Fewer same day car trips by Canadians and Americans



Source: Statistics Canada

In contrast to passenger travel, between 1993 and 2003, the number of trucks crossing the border through the four ports in the Lower Mainland region has been increasing, rising from 387,000 in 1993 to 542,000 last year. As was the case for passenger vehicles, commercial traffic through these border crossings has declined substantially since 9/11.

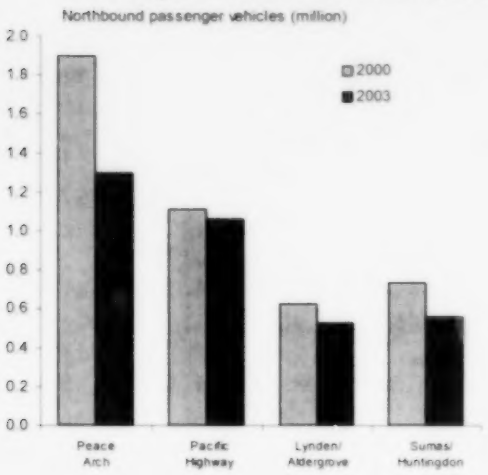
Fewer commercial and passenger vehicles crossing the border near Vancouver



Source: IMTC Cross-Border Trade and Travel Study

[1] The International Mobility and Trade Corridor Project (www.wcog.org)

Fewer vehicles at all four border crossings in the Lower Mainland area



Source: IMTC Cross-Border Trade and Travel Study

While all border crossings are processing fewer vehicles, the Peace Arch crossing has seen the biggest decline in traffic. This crossing, connecting Surrey, BC and Blaine, Washington, is the busiest in BC and one of the five busiest in Canada. Traffic volume through the Peace Arch crossing in 2003 (1.3 million) was only about two thirds of that in 2000 (1.9 million).

Top 5 Border Crossings for Personal Vehicles travelling to the US ('000)

	2002	2003
Buffalo-Niagara Falls, NY	7,570	6,414
Detroit, MI	6,857	6,316
Blaine, WA [2]	2,385	2,300
Port Huron, MI	2,187	1,965
Massena, NY	1,163	1,134
Total Canada-US Crossings	32,539	30,214

Source: US Department of Transportation

Canada-US Smart Border Declaration

The post 9/11 downturn in cross-border travel by car is almost certainly related to the greater difficulty of crossing the border, as increasingly strict security measures have been implemented in order to reduce the possibility of future terrorist attacks. This tightening of the border has led to longer transit times, and more importantly, an increase in uncertainty about the time that border crossings will take. Among other things, long lineups at border crossings make same-day trips less practical for both Americans and Canadians.

The Canada-US Smart Border Declaration is intended to ensure the secure flow of people, the secure flow of goods, secure infrastructure, and coordination and information sharing[3]. Although this makes the public safer, it also means that it has become a great deal less convenient to travel between Canada and the US by car. This has helped keep the lid on travel from the US to BC during the post-9/11 period.

[2] Total of Peace Arch and Pacific Highway Crossings

[3] Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/can-am/menu-en.asp?act=v&mid=1&cat=1&did=1669)

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BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Jul 1/04	% change on one year ago
BC	4,196.4	1.1
Canada	31,825.4	0.9
GDP and INCOME		
(BC - at market prices)	2003	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	142,418	5.1
GDP *($ 1997 millions)*	130,914	2.2
GDP *($ 1997 per Capita)*	31,572	1.4
Personal Disposable Income *($ 1997 per Capita)*	19,495	-0.4
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Jul	3,595	1.2
Merchandise Exports - Jul	2,820	0.4
Retail Sales - Jul	3,964	1.2
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		12-month avg
(all items - 1992=100)	Aug '04	% change
BC	123.3	1.8
Canada	124.8	1.7
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on
(seasonally adjusted)	Aug '04	prev. month
Labour Force - BC	2,239	-0.3
Employed - BC	2,067	-0.7
Unemployed - BC	172	5.4
		Jul '04
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	7.7	7.3
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	7.2	7.2
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Sep 29/04	Oct 1/03
Prime Business Rate	4.00	4.50
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	4.80	4.55
- 5 year	6.30	6.15
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Sep 29/04	Oct 1/03
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $	1.2725	1.3480
US $ *(reciprocal of the closing rate)*	0.7875	0.7434
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Aug '04	one year ago
BC	690.10	0.4
Canada	682.29	2.4

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

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BC STATS, Ministry of Management Services, Box 9410 Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, B.C. V8W 9V1
Tel: (250) 387-0327 Fax: (250) 387-0329 Web: www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca E-mail: BC.Stats@gems8.gov.bc.ca